

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **AIRPORT CRIME STRATEGY STARTING TO SHOW RESULTS, SAYS O. R. TAMBO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

*Kempton Park, 14 August 2017* – Management of O. R. Tambo International Airport says that the implementation of the integrated multi-disciplinary tactical security plan announced on 21 July is progressing well and showing some encouraging early results.

A number of suspects have been arrested at the airport in the past two weeks in connection with interceptions of shipments of drugs and rhino horn as well as vehicle theft.

“The strategic and operational support from the Ministries of Police, State Security, Transport and Home Affairs, as well as from the Ekurhuleni Metro and others, is proving instrumental in driving this results-oriented effort,” says Leigh Gunkel-Keuler, spokesperson for O. R. Tambo International Airport.

“O.R. Tambo International Airport commends all the law enforcement agencies concerned and looks forward to sustained success in combating crime in and around the airport,” she said.

Two significant arrests were made by Customs and Excise and the South African Police Service on Saturday. The suspects in two separate interceptions were arrested for the illegal possession of narcotics with street values of several millions of rand.

It was established that while the suspects work at the airport, they are directly employed by ground handling companies, Menzies and Swissport respectively, said Gunkel-Keuler.

She says scrutiny of people working at the airport across all jobs and employers can be expected to increase.

“O.R. Tambo International Airport is in many ways like a small city. We have more than 21 million passengers landing or departing every year. It takes more than 35 000 people working at the airport for different service providers and stakeholders to keep things running smoothly.”

Gunkel-Keuler says only 1 200 of these people are directly employed by the airport with the rest spread across retail, public transport, airlines, ground handling, vehicle rental, financial services, hospitality, hotels and government agencies such as Home Affairs and SARS.

“Security operations can therefore be complicated at times. However, we continue to intensify a variety of security measures that include background checks and interviews of people working at the airport. Over time these checks will be conducted repeatedly on each person and at short notice on a schedule that is not easy to anticipate,” she said.

Daily interactions at operational level among a large number of agencies and people is benefiting from strong ministerial involvement and support, says Gunkel-Keuler. “Airport management anticipates further successes as additional elements of the crime strategy are implemented in the coming months,” she said.

**ENDS**

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